



# EAST YORK INKLINGS

Newsletter of the East York Historical Society

Volume 9, Issue 2 – March 2013

## President's Message...

Dear Friends and Supporters,

It's hard to believe that we have coasted through the first two months of 2013 and can begin to look forward to longer days and warm temperatures in the forecast.

This newsletter is meant to update our members and supporters of the activities that were discussed at our last Annual General Meeting in November. We also hope you can attend our events listed and learn more about the deep roots that run through our great community. We can also be especially proud of the fact that the community and former Town of Leaside celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. Several exciting events are being planned throughout 2013 and we encourage you to take part in as many as possible.

### Please renew your membership today!

I have also taken the liberty of enclosing our **2013 membership form** and would ask that you renew today if you haven't already done so. Without our members and supporters, it becomes more challenging to put in the time and organize some good events that bring many residents together who cherish our history and the community that we call home. A warm welcome to new members Ron Chamberlain, Linda Martin and Paul Von Zuben. Please remember to pick up your name tags from the table so we can get better acquainted.

We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events later this month.

Sincerely,

Jane Pitfield  
President

*Please join us at the annual*

## Agnes Macphail Award Ceremony

Sunday, March 24, 2013 ~ 2:30 p.m.  
True Davidson Council Chambers  
East York Civic Centre –  
850 Coxwell Ave.

For information, contact:  
Lorna Krawchuk at 416-425-4431



*Mark your calendars  
and join us at the  
meetings below*

**Wednesday, March 20, 2013  
2:00 p.m.**

**Topic: The History of Bennington Heights  
Speaker: Peter Weatherhead**

**Tuesday, March 26, 2013**

**Refreshments at 7:00pm**

**Meeting commences at 7:30pm**

**Topic: Leaside's**

**100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and History**

**Speaker: Jane Pitfield and Geoff Kettel**

**Tuesday, May 28, 2013**

**Refreshments at 7:00pm**

**Meeting commences at 7:30pm**

**Topic: The Water Czar – R.C. Harris**

**Speaker: Wayne Reeves, Chief Curator  
for the City of Toronto Museum Services**

**The East York Historical Society  
meetings are co-sponsored by the  
Toronto Public Library,  
and take place in the**

**John S. Ridout Auditorium at the  
S. Walter Stewart Library Branch,  
located at 170 Memorial Park Avenue  
on the corner of Memorial Park Ave.  
and Durant Ave.**

**Meetings take place on the last  
Tuesday of January, March, May,  
September and November.**



East York Historical Society – 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting  
Minutes – Tuesday, November 27, 2012

---

- **Meeting was called to order** at 7:30pm with 30 members in attendance for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the East York Historical Society (EYHS)
- **Minutes from the previous Annual General Meeting** were reviewed with a *Motion to approve moved by Chris Salmond; seconded by Barbara Morrison – APPROVED*
- **Annual Report:** Jane Pitfield, in her capacity as President of the East York Historical Society, updated those in attendance with the activities that the Board has been involved with in the past year. Margaret has worked hard on generating interest and support for sales of the East York Flag and we encourage members to purchase one. Val Dodge and Justin Van Dette are new members of the Board. A plaque unveiling took place to commemorate the home of Agnes Macphail and the EYHS is pursuing the old Thorncliffe Park Racetrack, which operated from 1922 to 1952, as a possible location to unveil our next plaque. As always we continue to rely on suggestions from our membership on other considerations so that we can properly commemorate the history of East York. Membership has grown to 133 – a substantial increase. Several successful events were organized and frequent communication to our members is ongoing. A draft outline of the events that are being planned for 2013 will continue to bring out our members. *Motion to adopt the Annual Report from the Chair – moved by Chris Salmond; seconded by Pancheta Barnett – APPROVED*
- **Treasurer's Report:** A Treasurer's Report was distributed and presented by Kay Horiszny that showed the bank balance for the East York Historical Society sitting just over \$4,300.00 in our account at RBC. *Motion to adopt the Treasurers Report – moved by Pancheta Barnett; seconded by Marilyn Clark – APPROVED.*
- **Financial Reviewers Report:** The Chair reported that Lorna Krawchuk has offered to be the Financial Reviewer of the East York Historical Society – *Motion moved to appoint and nominate Lorna Krawchuk as the Financial Reviewer of the EYHS and to accept her report on the bottom of the Treasurer's Report - moved by Pancheta Barnett; seconded by Chris Joys – APPROVED*
- **Elections of Officers - Directors.** Ed Freeman assumed the Chair so that he can conduct the Elections for the EYHS Board of Directors.  
Jane Pitfield President  
Pancheta Barnett – Vice President  
Val Dodge - Director  
John Michailidis - Director  
Hon. Alan Redway - Director  
Chris Salmond - Director  
  
*Motion to close nominations and accept these board members moved by Marilyn Clark; seconded by Barbara Morrison – APPROVED*  
  
It was announced that Kathleen Horiszny continues as our Treasurer and Justin Van Dette has been appointed as our Secretary and Margaret McRae continues as Past President.  
  
*Motion to close nominations moved by Marilyn Clark; seconded by Barbara Morrison – APPROVED*
- **Keynote Speaker:** President Jane Pitfield introduced keynote speaker, Dr. Ron Williams, who spoke to us about the Pain and Suffering of the War of 1812 – The Evidence from the Snake Hill Cemetery.
- **Adjournment:** Members of the East York Historical Society adjourned the Annual General Meeting at 8:43pm

# Celebrating 100 years of Leaside

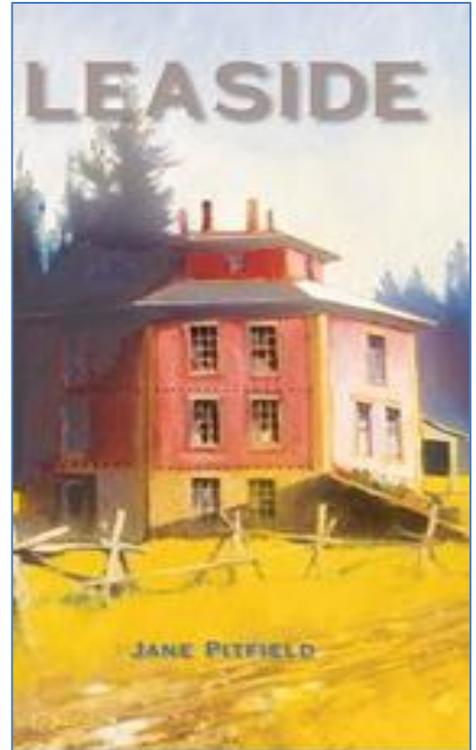
Leaside One Hundred is a year of community celebration honouring the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of the Town of Leaside, which was established by act of the Provincial legislature on 23 April 1913.

Helping to spearhead the initiative is the Leaside One Hundred committee, a community based organization, which is comprised of co-chairs Virginia Evoy and John Piper. Its other members are Lorna Krawchuk, Geoff Kettel, John Parker, Charlene Kalia, and Muhammed Wani.

The committee intends to sponsor and organize a number of significant local events and projects during the year 2013. It also hopes to serve as a catalyst and facilitator for the initiatives of other Leaside residents, businesses, and organizations who share the vision of making 2013 an occasion to promote an awareness and appreciation of Leaside's unique history, its present successes, and its future possibilities.

Celebrations are expected to include family oriented festivals, co-marketing of Leaside sports & arts organizations' seasons, liaising with neighbourhood organizations such as churches, schools, the Leaside library, garden clubs, local businesses, and historical societies all to mark this milestone year in Leaside's ongoing legacy.

The Leaside One Hundred committee can be contacted through the office of Councillor John Parker at 416-392-0215.



**Leaside by Jane Pitfield**

**Leaside Book are available for \$28.00. All proceeds are being directed to the Leaside Property Owners Association. Please contact Jane Pitfield at 416-482-9345 or by e-mail at [jane.pitfield@hotmail.com](mailto:jane.pitfield@hotmail.com) for your copy**

<http://www.leaside100.ca>  
[info@leaside100.ca](mailto:info@leaside100.ca)  
[www.facebook.com/LeasideOneHundred](http://www.facebook.com/LeasideOneHundred)



# East York Tidbits

---

## *Stories About East York Presented by the East York Historical Society*

Glimpses of East York, the *East Yorker* Newsletter  
Prepared by John Michailidis

East York experienced tremendous growth in the years after the Second World War. In 1931, seven years after the incorporation of the Township of East York, its population was 36,000. Twenty years later its population climbed to 64,000 and in 1961 it reached 72,000. After the war, the Town of Leaside, the Township's future municipal partner, also experienced tremendous growth. Leaside's population fewer than 1,000 in 1931 skyrocketed to 16,000 by 1951 and reached over 18,000 in 1961. By the end of the 1960s, the population of the amalgamated Township of East York and the Town of Leaside as the new Borough of East York was 102,000.

By the late 1950s, Township Council realized that they needed a voice to communicate the Township's recent and upcoming activities to the growing number of people who chose to make East York their home. The *East Yorker* newsletter became that voice. The inaugural March 1960 issue describes the purpose of the publication as "a suitable means of keeping East York residents informed about the affairs of the municipality..."

Percy Bustin, a long-time Township Alderman spearheaded the publication of the *East Yorker*, which he edited from 1960 to 1962. Published quarterly by the municipality, usually in March, June, September and December in an easy-to-read 4 to 6 page folded booklet format, it continued to be the voice of the municipality until December 1997. Gail Hill, the last editor of the *East Yorker*, closed the last issue with "Because of amalgamation, this is the last issue of the *East Yorker*. I have enjoyed editing the paper for the past 6 years, especially because it has allowed me to meet so many East York residents."

Along with editing the *East Yorker* in the early 1960s, Percy Bustin was an avid supporter of local

history. Percy was a druggist who operated the drug store he opened in 1924 at the southeast corner of Coxwell Avenue and Sammon Avenue.

In his 1974 self-published brief history of East York, Percy recounted the story of his first customer at his drug store in 1924.

In 1924 Coxwell Avenue ended near Percy's drug store. To the north of Sammon Avenue were dirt paths, open fields and wild bush. Not knowing how he would be accepted in the wilds of the newly created Township of East York, Percy nervously awaited his first customer behind the counter of his drug store. While he slipped into the back room to straighten his tie in the mirror he heard scratching at the front screen door and the door opening and shutting quickly several times. "Strange" thought Percy, "perhaps my first customer is as nervous as me; a little hesitant to step in the new drug store." With one last look in the mirror and putting on his most friendly smile, Percy stepped from the back room taking his place behind the counter to welcome his first customer. To Percy's amazement at his front door was a horse with its head sticking inside the screen door. Percy's first customer in the wilds of the new Township of East York was a horse!

Although experiencing tremendous growth itself, East York was surrounded by larger, faster-growing municipalities within Metro Toronto. As a minnow among whales, a reason East York and Leaside maintained a strong sense of place and character was the publication of the *East Yorker*. We owe Percy Bustin our gratitude for overseeing the creation of the *East Yorker* newsletter and his support of local history.

The *East Yorker* newsletter is a valuable time capsule containing local stories perhaps not available from any other source about important activities in the municipality. Whether you are a recent or an old East York resident, I urge you to read through issues of the *East Yorker* newsletter. Originals of the *East Yorker*

are available at the S. Walter Stewart Library, Local History Section and the Toronto Reference Library.

To entice you, here are several stories carried in the *East Yorker* in the 1960s, a decade of growth, change, prosperity and confidence.

Between 1961 and 1969, every June issue of the *East Yorker* devoted a page to outlining the July 1 Dominion Day events. These events remained generally unchanged during the 1960s and most take place during today's successor Canada Day event. The daylong celebration starts with a parade featuring floats, fire trucks, girl guides, boy scouts and veterans. Local kids with decorated bicycles would join the parade. Prizes were given to the best decorated bicycles. The parade route changed yearly, but it usually started or ended at Cedarvale Park, Memorial Park or Dieppe Park.

After the parade, the afternoon would include stage shows of folk dancing, concert bands and precisionettes. A swim meet for kids would be held at the Kiwanis Pool. The track meet at East York Collegiate stadium was a popular afternoon event. Local athletes such as Bruce Kidd and Bill Crothers would compete against runners from the USA and Britain.

The evening included dancing "under the stars" at the Dominion Store (now Shoppers Drug Mart) parking lot at Woodbine Avenue and O'Connor Drive with celebrated square dance caller Margaret Hough. In addition to square dancing, the 1969 *East Yorker* mentions that "modern" dancing would be available at Cedarvale Park. The June 1970 issue of the *East Yorker* went a step further than "modern" dancing, as it announced that a "Rock Concert" was to take place in the valley.

A "mammoth fireworks display" at Cedarvale Park capped off every Dominion Day, as it still does today. As in the 1960s, the daylong July 1 celebration continues to be an integral part of the community's fibre. The celebration was and continues to have the feel of a small town gathering.

In 1960 East York Hydro's residential connection fee is \$2.00.

On April 13 1960, members of Council visited the latest dial exchange at the Bell Telephone building on

Donlands Avenue, near O'Connor Drive. The new exchange known as Garden will serve 3,400 customers formerly served by Howard, Oxford and Hudson.

East York Track Club member Ergas Leps broke the Canadian open record for the 880 yards at the 1960 Dominion Day Track Meet at East York Collegiate stadium with a time of 1.49.8. Bruce Kidd, 16, also of the East York club established a new Canadian junior record for the mile with a time of 4.19.7.

In June 1961 the *East Yorker* reported that Bruce Kidd, the 17-year-old local running sensation, won the 2-mile run at Boston Garden in 8.42.2, nearly a full minute faster than any schoolboy has ever run that distance. In the U.S. championships at Madison Square Gardens, Kidd won the 3-mile race in 13.47.

In 1961, courses on personal survival, rescue, and radiation decontamination are available from the regional headquarters of the Metropolitan Civil Defence Organisation located on Sammon Avenue. Township Council has asked staff to report on the feasibility of establishing public fallout shelters in the Township.

Also in 1961, Council refuses to endorse the use of sweepstakes to raise money for hospitals.

In June 1961 the *East Yorker* announces the establishment of the new East York Historical Society. The Society is looking for prospective members. Anyone with old letters, pictures or other material about the early days of East York is asked to contact the East York Library.

In June 1961 the *East Yorker* published this poem about East York written by Mrs Gladys James of Chisholm Avenue.

*Though you boast about London,  
Paris and Cork,  
You'll ne'er find a place  
To compare with East York;  
Its people are friendly,  
Warmhearted and true,  
If you can't get along,  
Then the trouble is you.*

A petition signed by 85% of the retail businessmen of the Township was presented to Council in early 1962 requesting that the early closing bylaw be retained and enforced. The merchants are opposed to the trend to longer business hours of some of the discount stores. The merchants feel the trend is a backward step and a temporary situation.

A Liquor Plebiscite will be held on November 3, 1962 on 2 questions: 1. "Are you in favour of the sale of liquor under a dining lounge license for consumption with meals on licensed premises?" and 2. "Are you in favour of the sale of liquor under a lounge license for consumption on licensed premises?" Also on the plebiscite, East Yorkers will be asked if they approve of sports on Sundays.

The 2 questions on the Liquor Plebiscite to allow dining room lounges and cocktail bars were defeated by East York residents. The other question on the plebiscite to allow Sunday sports was approved.

To celebrate Canada's centennial in 1967, in October 1964 the East York Centennial Committee has selected Todmorden Park, just southwest of Pottery Road, as the Township's centennial project. The site has 4 nineteenth century buildings that will be restored and used as an educational museum. The East York Horticultural Society intends to plant an authentic old-fashion garden of flowers and vegetables beside one of the buildings and to plant wildflowers throughout the site.

On August 4, 1964, the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of World War 1, the "Old Contemptibles" remembered the beginning of the war by placing a

wreath at the Township's cenotaph.

It is anticipated that the East York Foundation will be established in 1965 by private legislation at the next session at Queen's Park. The foundation will hold gifts to East York in permanent trust.

In June 1965 Council has arranged a mass public meeting at the East York Collegiate auditorium to discuss the Goldenberg Report, which recommends that the City of Toronto annex East York and other local municipalities in Metro. A fear is that annexation will bring higher taxes to East Yorkers. Also, many of the local recreational and cultural programmes cherished by East Yorkers, like the Dominion Day festivities might be lost.

On September 8, 1965 a public meeting will be held for East York and Leaside residents at the S. Walter Stewart Library. Reeve True Davidson will warn citizens about the disastrous effects of the Goldenberg Report recommendation that the City of Toronto annex East York. She intends to stress that East York would lose control over many services enjoyed by East Yorkers like cultural and recreational facilities, welfare and building regulations. As an alternative to the Goldenberg Report, she will propose a 6-city plan for Metro. After the question period, citizens will be given the opportunity to mark ballots indicating their tentative preferences. The East York and Leaside ballots will be different colours and the ballot results given to the East York and Leaside Councils.

With the tolling of the bells to bring in the 1967 two important events came into being: Canada's

## DOORS OPEN

PRESENTED BY  GREAT GULF

The 14th annual Doors Open offers residents and visitors an opportunity to take a peek behind the doors of nearly 150 architecturally, historically, culturally and socially significant buildings across the city on Saturday May 25 and Sunday May 26, 2013. This year's theme is entitled 'Creators, Makers and Innovators' and features many older buildings that have been redesigned, re-invented and re-purposed into modern 21st century spaces that host collaborative teams of imaginative people who are creating new ways of thinking, making and doing. A complete list of venues for 2013 will be released soon at [www.toronto.ca/doorsopen/2013](http://www.toronto.ca/doorsopen/2013)

## Volunteers Needed!

East York Historical Society are looking for volunteers who can help run our table at Todmorden Mills for **Doors Open Toronto** on Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup>. If you're able to assist, please sign-up at the Registration Desk at one of our meetings or contact Margaret McRae at 416-429-7821

centennial year and the birth of the Borough of East York, consisting of the former Township of East York and the Town of Leaside. The population of the new Borough is 97,000. Despite the misgivings of many individuals that the amalgamation of these 2 proud municipalities would prove a failure, the transition has taken place smoothly. Mayor True Davidson and the 8 Aldermen representing the 4 wards in the Borough will work hard to make all citizens proud of the new Borough.

Voter turnout at the recent December 1966 municipal election was over 43% in the new Borough, by far the highest of the new 6 Metro municipalities.

On October 7, 1967 Judy La Marsh, Secretary of State will officially open East York's Todmorden Mills Park Centennial Project.

The design by Harry Faulks of Brentcliffe Road was selected as the Borough's new crest. The design features green maple leaves, a brown beaver, a red shield and a bulldog. The Mayor presented Mr. Faulks with a pair of cuff links. In her 1968 state of the Borough address, Mayor True Davidson points out that this is the era of soft services to supplement the hard services. When the family fails government must act. She emphasized that the Borough is fortunate to have many residents willing to contribute to the recreational, cultural and social needs of the community on a voluntary basis.

After about 2 years of discussion in September 1968 Borough Council has approved a huge 33 acre housing development at Victoria Park Avenue and Dawes Road. The development will be known as Crescent Town, named after the private school "Crescent School" currently on the site. Designed by James Murray, Professor of Architecture at the

University of Toronto, the \$50 million project is the second biggest in Metro and will house 3,000 families. It incorporates the most advanced ideas in people-oriented high density development, with much landscaping, natural areas, recreational facilities and a new public school.

In December 1968 the *East Yorker* reports that East York is not just a municipality-it's a way of life. The East York Foundation offers citizens the opportunity to leave something of lasting value to their community. The Foundation already has contributions totaling over \$1,000 and custody of pictures, antiques and rare books. Gifts can be made to the Foundation by completing the "Patrons of East York Foundation" form.

No taxes for East Yorkers in 1969? Prince Edward Island gets about 65% (about \$30 million) of its annual budget from the federal government. East York's population is about equal to that of P.E.I. and the Borough's 1968 budget was \$23.3 million. If East York could get the same treatment from the federal government as P.E.I. there would be no taxes in East York in 1969!

In 1969 the last unpaved street in the Borough, Halsey Avenue east off Dawes Road, will be paved at a cost of \$8,614.52.

The twin Leaside Towers will be built in 1970 in Thorncliffe Park. The 43 storey towers will be Canada's tallest residential apartment buildings. Each tower will have 494 air-conditioned suites and three levels of parking. The project will cost \$20 million.

Dominion Regalia, which was located on Elm Street in Toronto, have moved its operations to O'Connor Drive in East York.

East York Historical Society and Heritage Toronto

## The Art and Science of Warfare during the the War of 1812

Wednesday, April 24, 2013 ~ 7:00pm to 9:00pm  
Papermill Theatre ~ Todmorden Mills – 67 Pottery Road



**Heritage  
Toronto**

Free Admission to those who register online through Heritage Toronto website at <http://heritagetoronto.org/> East York Historical Society will have an information table at this event and we are seeking volunteers who can assist. If you can help us out, please sign up at the registration desk at one of our upcoming meetings.

*Show your  
pride with an  
East York flag*



Margaret McRae who coordinated the order and sale of 25 large flags last year has agreed to oversee the process of ordering medium sized flags for the spring of 2013 for \$60.00 per flag. She already has a list of members who have expressed an interest in ordering these medium-sized flags. Please contact Margaret at 416-429-7821 or see Kay Horiszny at the membership desk at EYHS meetings if you would like to order one of these flags. Or mail a cheque payable to "East York Historical Society" and mail to:

East York Historical Society  
10 McKayfield Road,  
East York, ON, M4J 4P7

We hope to place the order in March.

The East York Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and sharing information about East York's rich past. The Society meets 5 evenings a year usually on the last Tuesday in January, March, May, September and November and selected afternoons in the autumn and winter months.

**INTERESTED IN THE  
EAST YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY,  
CONTACT US...**

Jane Pitfield, President,  
East York Historical Society  
416-456-3665 – jane.pitfield@hotmail.com

Web: [www.east york.org/eyhs.html](http://www.east york.org/eyhs.html)

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Jane Pitfield, President  
Pancheta Barnett, Vice President  
Kay Horiszny, Treasurer  
Justin Van Dette, Secretary  
Margaret McRae, Past President/Director  
Val Dodge, Director  
John Michailidis, Director  
Hon. Alan Redway, Director  
Christopher Salmond, Director

**EAST YORK...  
Then and Now!**

We encourage our members and supporters to visit and LIKE a great facebook page: **EAST YORK... Then and Now.** This site features some great photos of our community that date back decades. Feel free to get in touch with them if you have any that you would like to share. You can visit the page at:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/East-York-Then-and-Now/340651007038?fref=ts>

**Right, Del—Ray  
Coaches, coach, Dawes  
Rd, (Executive  
Department) - 1936**

